



Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

December 12, 2000

In reply refer to: KEC-4

To: People Interested in the Schultz - Hanford Area Transmission Line Project

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to build a new transmission line that could affect you. This letter briefly explains what is being proposed, outlines our process and schedule, and invites you to meetings where you can learn more.

Proposal - BPA is proposing to construct a transmission line through central Washington. The new 500-kilovolt (kV) line would relieve constraints on several transmission lines across the state. It would also provide more operational flexibility so that BPA can meet its obligations to endangered salmon and maintain transmission capacity to import and export energy.

Alternatives - Possible transmission routes are in Kittitas, Yakima, Grant, and Benton Counties. (See attached map.) The proposed line would be constructed from Schultz Substation (near Ellensburg) to either a substation on the Hanford Reach National Monument within the Hanford Nuclear Reservation or a new substation just southwest of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation. Four alternative routes are being considered. All would require the purchase of new right-of-way.

- **Alternative 1** would parallel the existing 500-kV line that runs from Schultz Substation to Vantage Substation and on to Hanford Substation (called the Schultz-Vantage-Hanford line). The new line would be 200 to 2000 feet from the existing line. An option would be to end the new line at Ashe Substation. In that case, the new line would continue parallel to the existing Hanford-Ashe 500-kV line at a distance of 200 to 2000 feet.
- **Alternative 2** would parallel the existing Schultz-Vantage 500-kV line at a distance of 200 to 2000 feet. It would then parallel next to the existing Midway-Vantage 230-kV line to a new Blackrock Substation near Benton Rural Electric Association's existing Blackrock Substation.
- **Alternative 3** would parallel (at a distance of 200-2000 feet) the existing Schultz-Vantage 500-kV line to the west side of the Columbia River. The line would then turn south on new right-of-way to the new Blackrock Substation. In the area requiring new right-of-way, we have included a broad study area.
- **Alternative 4** would parallel the existing Columbia-Ellensburg-Moxee-Midway 115-kV lines that pass through Ellensburg and Yakima before ending at the new Blackrock Substation.

We are also considering not building a new line.

Public Meetings - We will soon start to assess the environmental impacts of the proposed alternatives. But before we do, we would like to hear from you. What questions do you have? What resources should we analyze? Are there other routes we should consider? We have scheduled open house public meetings to hear your ideas.

**Tuesday, January 9, 2001
4 to 8 p.m.**

Sage Brush Senior Center
442 Desert Aire Drive
Desert Aire, Washington

**Wednesday, January 1, 2001
4 to 8 p.m.**

Yakima County Courthouse
Room 420
Yakima, Washington

**Thursday, Jan. 11, 2001
4 to 8 p.m.**

Hal Holmes Community Center
201 North Ruby Street
Ellensburg, Washington

We do not plan to give a formal presentation at the meetings, so come anytime between 4 and 8 p.m. Several members of the project team will be available to answer your questions and listen to your ideas.

Other Ways to Comment - If you cannot come to one of the meetings, you can still comment. If you comment by January 25, 2001, we'll be able to incorporate your ideas into our environmental studies. Call BPA's toll-free comment line at 1-800-622-4519, and leave a message (please include the name of this project); send an e-mail to: comment@bpa.gov; or mail comments to Bonneville Power Administration, Public Affairs Officer - KC-7, P.O. Box 12999, Portland, Oregon 97212. You can use the enclosed form to submit comments if you like.

Process/Schedule - The information we gather in our environmental analysis will be published in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement that will be available for review and comment late next year. If you would like to receive a copy, please return the enclosed postcard and check whether you would like to receive it by regular or electronic mail. If you do not return the postcard, you will still receive notice when the study is available.

Once we have completed the environmental review, BPA will decide whether and how to proceed with the project. If BPA decides to proceed, construction would likely begin in 2004.

For More Information - If you have any questions about this proposal, please call me toll-free at 1-800-282-3713, at my direct number, (503) 230-5525; or send an e-mail to ldriessen@bpa.gov.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,

/s/

Lou Driessen
Project Manager

3 Enclosures:
Map
Post Card
Comment Form

bcc:

Official File - KEC (EQ-14)

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